

ments of the Galactic bankruptcy trustee and State Parks was able to consummate an agreement for the purchase of the property.

Bodie, at least superficially, meets the definition of a ghost town which is, according to the *Random House College Dictionary*, "a community permanently abandoned by its inhabitants." However, the threat which has loomed over it during the last nine years has shown that Bodie continues to be inhabited by a spirit more substantial than any of its ghosts. While Bodie may be empty of inhabitants, it has never been deserted by them. We have discovered that there is a dispersed worldwide spirit of shared interest which has never abandoned this special place. This interest cuts not only across space but across economic and bureaucratic boundaries. Though sometimes separated by distance and ideology, when their town is threatened Bodie's protectors draw together in a partnership to channel their collective energies to its defense, just as any society would do in the face of an impending menace. Thanks to them, Bodie has achieved an initial crit-

ical acquisition. But additional work is necessary to complete the property purchase and to stabilize structures before Bodie can be considered "saved".

Nonetheless, there is cause for celebration. In September 1997, the 35th anniversary of Bodie State Historic Park, a re-dedication of the unit will be held on the historic and now-preserved hills overlooking the town as the park is doubled in size and the golden heart of the district is finally returned to the public for its protection, education and enjoyment.

Note

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Midway National Historic Landmark: Transfer and Transformation

In 1993, after more than 50 years of service, the U.S. Navy closed its Naval Air Facility at Midway, pursuant to the Base Realignment and Closure Act of 1990 (P.L. 101-510). In 1996, the atoll was officially transferred to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS).

Midway Atoll is at the northern end of the Hawaiian island chain, approximately 1,250 miles northwest of Honolulu. Midway comprises a roughly circular outer reef approximately 5 miles in diameter that encloses a central lagoon and two main islands, Sand and Eastern. The Atoll's exceptional ecosystem supports the largest Laysan albatross colony in the world, the second largest black-footed albatross colony, at least 13 other species of migratory seabirds, four species of migratory shorebirds, endangered Hawaiian monk seals, threatened green sea turtles, and a diversity of other marine species. Midway Atoll National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) was established in 1988 to

meet federal responsibilities for migratory and marine species.

Midway Atoll was the site of the Battle of Midway, considered to be the turning point of World War II in the Pacific, reversing the tide of Japanese expansion and reviving U.S. military morale. Ten structures directly related to the Battle were commemorated in 1986 as a National Historic Landmark (NHL).

In 1995, the Navy identified and evaluated 64 additional properties remaining on Midway that are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. In order to handle the complicated issues and adverse effects of transferring the 74 historic properties from the Navy to the USFWS, a Programmatic Agreement (PA) was developed. The PA, initially generated by the Navy, received input from the USFWS, Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (Council), the National Park Service, the State Historic Preservation Officer of the State of Hawaii, the Sixth Defense Battalion, the U.S.

World War II Facilities at Midway National Historic Landmark, Midway Islands. One of several surviving ammunition magazines that serviced the gun batteries during the Battle of Midway, June 1942. Courtesy E.N. Thompson.

Marine Corps, and Defenders of Midway Islands Reunion Association, and the International Midway Memorial Foundation. An August 1995 meeting of interested parties led to a plan for managing historic resources on Midway and also raised concerns regarding public access. Visits to the atoll have been restricted since 1941. For many, public access was a priority.

While not every building or structure could be preserved, a consensus was achieved through the PA negotiations to maintain contiguous portions of the World War II-era landscape. Six levels of preservation were defined in the PA, including: reuse, secure, leave as-is, fill, demolish, or relocate. The management category for each of the historic properties was based on many factors, such as historic importance, interpretive value, overall setting, association with key themes, structural integrity, and recommendations from interest groups, specialists, and the Council. Prior to transfer, the buildings and structures were recorded according to Historic American Buildings Survey or Historic American Engineering Record standards.

Midway's NHL status is based on its significance during World War II, but the Atoll's historical character is also derived from events beginning a century earlier. The first recorded landing, in 1859, was made by Captain N.C. Brooks, who named the island grouping "Middlebrook Islands." In 1867 the Secretary of the Navy sent Captain Reynolds to take possession of the islands for the United States. The atoll was renamed Midway in 1869. Efforts in the 1870s to open a channel in the reef were unsuccessful, and for the next 30 years visits to the Atoll were limited to shipwreck survivors and bird hunters.

Midway's role as an important communications link with the Far East was established in 1903 when the Commercial Pacific Cable Company chose Sand Island for one of its relay stations. The first superintendent was Ben W. Colley, who arrived in April 1903 with a staff of about 30 people. Verandah-style, two-story concrete buildings were constructed to serve as an office, a mess hall, and quarters that featured a library and billiard room. Colley imported soil from Honolulu to create a garden for growing fresh vegetables.

The cable station employees began to file reports of foreign activities on Midway. Especially disturbing was the presence of Japanese poachers

who collected feathers and threatened the safety of the island residents. In January 1903, President Theodore Roosevelt placed the Midway Islands and environs "under the jurisdiction and control of the Navy Department" by Executive Order 199-a. In May 1904, a group of 20 Marines arrived on the island to provide protection for the cable staff and island wildlife. In 1905 the U.S. Lighthouse Service established a lighthouse on Sand Island, further legitimizing U.S. claims to Midway Atoll. Pan American Airways began using Midway as a stopover in the mid-1930s.

Military interest in Midway accelerated as World War II started in Europe. The Pacific Naval Air Base Contractors began work on three asphalt-paved runways on Eastern Island, along with two



hangars, shops, and storage buildings. In 1941 the Naval Air Station was commissioned, altering the civilian character of Midway. The architectural style of the buildings reflected the military presence in their uniform, efficient design. The Navy contracted Albert Kahn, one of the country's foremost industrial designers, to prepare standardized plans for barracks, mess halls, and hangars.

Marines from the 3rd Defense Battalion and 6th Defense Battalion landed on Midway in 1940-1941 to emplace guns and build magazines and shelters. The troops were in place just in time to repel a Japanese raid on December 7, 1941.

In that incident, 2 Japanese destroyers shelled the island and Marine guns returned fire. The Japanese ships caused extensive damage and U.S. casualties amounted to 4 killed and 10 wounded. The most notorious hit was on the Sand Island power plant where a round entered an air port (window), rendering this "bomb-proof" building ineffective and disrupting a communications center. First Lieutenant George H. Cannon, although mortally wounded, stayed at his post

until communications were reestablished. He became the first marine to receive the Medal of Honor in World War II.

Suspecting that the Japanese were planning an invasion of Midway, Admiral Nimitz inspected the islands on May 2, 1942. Shortly thereafter, reinforcements arrived and an extensive system of obstacles and mines was placed around the beaches. Thirty-eight anti-aircraft guns were installed by the end of May.

The Battle of Midway began on June 3, 1942, when a Japanese occupation fleet was spotted by a patrol plane. Because the Japanese had maintained radio silence, they were unaware that the U.S. was already alerted to their presence. Early on June 4, Japanese carriers launched three waves of planes to destroy the air base at Midway and clear the way for occupation. The Japanese planes reached Midway about 0630, flying into a defensive barrage of anti-aircraft fire. At least 10 of the attacking planes were lost to this ground fire, but extensive physical damage and casualties occurred on Sand and Eastern Islands. From June 3 to 5, the majority of the battle was fought over the ocean west of Midway. Although it cost the lives of many American airmen and the loss of many planes, four Japanese carriers were sunk approximately 150 miles from Midway, and the Japanese fleet retreated. The Japanese Navy never fully recovered from this loss, and its expansion in the Pacific was stopped.

Since that pivotal moment in history, Midway has continued to be a strategic location for the military. During the Korean conflict, NAF Midway served as a refueling station. In the late-1950s Midway was substantially updated: the harbor and Sand Island runway were expanded; a new hangar with administration offices was built; and housing, a school, a chapel, a galley for 1,000 enlisted men, water and fuel facilities, and recreational facilities were constructed. During the Vietnam War, Midway was selected as the site for the June 8, 1969 meeting of President Thieu of the Republic of Vietnam and U.S. President Richard Nixon.

In the waning years of the Cold War, Midway's strategic importance as a military base diminished, but its unique historic associations and superb wildlife habitat quickly gained recognition.

The 1986 NHL boundary contains the 10 remaining defensive positions on Sand Island, including batteries, magazines, and pillboxes. Three of the 6th Battalion's magazines are included in the landmark and consist of quonset-hut shaped structures, made of corrugated metal with concrete floors. At the 3rd Defense Battalion's Battery D, two magazines remain. Battery D also

has concrete parapets that encircled the guns. The most extensive coastal defense that remains today are the two emplacements for the 3-inch naval battery. The pits are surrounded by substantial, seven-sided concrete parapets. An earth-covered, corrugated-metal magazine for this battery stands nearby.

Many of the World War II shoreline defensive structures were covered over later by Navy expansion projects. The construction of the extended runway on Sand Island and Cold War-era facilities along the southern shore of Sand Island has removed all trace of the gun locations in these areas.

Additional features for inclusion in Midway's NHL boundary are currently under review. The National Historic Landmark Division has recommended that "all surviving structures with historic integrity dating prior to 1945 should be included," and further that "the locations of the carrier USS *Yorktown*, destroyer USS *Hammann*, and the Japanese carriers, cruiser, and two destroyers sunk off the atoll...[S]hip and aircraft wrecks discovered offshore at a future date are related to and must then be considered for inclusion within the boundary area of the NHL." Discussions of Midway's NHL boundary will continue until a meaningful consensus is achieved by the many interest groups.

Another important issue relating to Midway's closure as a Naval facility is visitor access. In an unprecedented arrangement, the USFWS has secured the assistance of a commercial cooperator to share the burden of operating the facilities and providing transportation and services for tourists. Returning Sand and Eastern islands to appropriate wildlife habitat and providing opportunities for ecological and historical tours are goals of the refuge. Currently, the Navy's "clean-up" efforts are bringing the overall appearance of Midway closer to that of the 1940s. Recasting NAF Midway to Midway Atoll NWR is proving to be an exciting transformation.

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